

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

### TELEPHONE ANSWERING SYSTEM WITH COURTESY GREETING SELECTABLE AFTER CALL IS RECEIVED

5 A telephone answering system allows a recipient to spontaneously select a desired greeting after the phone has begun ringing to inform the caller that the call cannot be taken at this time and further providing an indication to either hold the line or when to expect a return call. A dedicated button is provided on the  
10 phone which, when pushed, selects a different greeting depending on the number of times the button is pushed. For example, if the recipient is interested in taking the call, but cannot at that particular instant, pressing the dedicated button one time will select a  
15 greeting like "Hold on a moment, I'll be right with you". For n presses, the selected greeting might be "I'm sorry, I can't pick up the phone right now, but please leave your number and I'll call back in  $((n-1) \times 10)$  minutes." Knowing when they can expect a call back  
20 will increase the likelihood that the caller will make themselves available at the call back time and discourage phone tag.